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## **Public Meetings Scheduled in Okanogan, Wenatchee on Salmon Recovery Plan**

The Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board and NOAA Fisheries Service will hold two public meetings in early November to help citizens understand and comment on a proposed recovery plan for salmon and steelhead in the upper Columbia River. The two organizations have worked together for almost three years to develop the proposed plan.

The plan is aimed at recovering salmon species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) that originate in the upper Columbia River region. Biologists with the agency said they expect non-listed salmon species -- summer Chinook, sockeye and reintroduced coho salmon -- will also benefit from the plan.

Under the ESA, NOAA Fisheries Service is required to develop a plan to recover species listed under that act. In the upper Columbia River basin, spring Chinook salmon are listed as "endangered" and steelhead are listed as "threatened."

The plan is not enforceable or regulatory, but instead sets goals and identifies actions that would, if implemented, lead to recovery of the listed species. NOAA Fisheries Service said that a locally developed plan adopted by the local, state, tribal and federal governments and supported by multiple stakeholders will be most likely to succeed and will reflect the recovery board's mission.

Two public meetings are scheduled:

- Wednesday, Nov. 8, 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. at the Okanogan County Commissioners' Hearing Room in Okanogan, and
- Thursday, Nov. 9, 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. in the Chelan County Commissioners' Meeting Room in Wenatchee

The Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board is made up of one county commissioner from Chelan, Douglas and Okanogan counties, one representative from the Colville Confederated Tribes, and a representative from the Yakama Nation. The board's mission is to restore viable and sustainable populations of salmon, steelhead and other at-risk species through collaborative, economically sensitive efforts, combined resources, and wise resource management of the upper Columbia River region.

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